

REMARKS

The Office Action dated November 28, 2003 has been reviewed carefully and the enclosed Amendment After Final is being entered in order to place the claims in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 2, 5, 13-14 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Roy, U.S. Patent No. 6,324,169. The distinctions between the present invention and the Roy reference were described in the earlier Amendment dated September 3, 2003.

The Examiner has indicated that the Applicants' conferencing nodes (which perform a conference between three or more participants who are callers connected at any port in the system) are anticipated by routers being connected to workstations of the Roy reference, each being equipped with multi-media conferencing application programs. Applicants respectfully submit that Applicants' ports are not anticipated by routers that are connected to specially programmed workstations. Indeed, Applicants' nodes can be connected to the PSTN and other private networks coupled with the system and do not have to be connected to PC workstations that have been specially programmed with a multimedia conferencing application program. As noted by the Examiner, the programmable switching node of Applicants' system can serve as many dif-

ferent networks as are coupled by the interfaces. Further, Applicants services can do so simultaneously.

However, as further noted by the Examiner, Applicants' claim language uses "and/or" when referring to the networks. Applicants have herein amended claims 2 and 17 to refer to the PSTN *and* private networks in order to enhance and clarify the aspect that Applicants' nodes can provide conferencing services to ports coupled by the interfaces to the system and those ports may serve PSTN callers, wireless callers, other private networks, and the like, and they do not have to be connected to routers, which, in turn, are coupled to specially-programmed workstations, as required in Roy. Furthermore, claim 17 has been amended to indicate that the nodes can switch communications to ports connected to the system via the PSTN and private networks. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2 and 17, as amended, are not anticipated by Roy. The remaining claims depend directly or indirectly upon either claims 2 or 17, and it is thus respectfully submitted that those claims, which provide even further limitations are also, therefore, now in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 7-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Roy in view of Phaal, U.S. Patent No. 6,006,269.

The Phaal reference relates to a program for controlling the handling of a stream of messages received by a server from the World Wide Web. Specifically, a server resident admission control program determines whether a requested website is

available to process a new session. The system determines whether the server is busy responding to other clients and, if so, a message is generated that a new client's inquiry will be processed later. Although Phaal includes a discussion of prioritizing messages, and reserving time slots for high priority clients, one of Phaal's solutions to managing a large degree of incoming messages/requests is to use a scheduler to assign appointments for some of the requests to be processed at a later time. Phaal does not relate to or suggest conferencing of multiple users simultaneously in one conference, as described by Applicants. Thus, there is nothing in Phaal alone that discloses, teaches or suggests solutions with respect to identifying the nature of a new conference (claims 7 and 10), or about selecting and reserving a DSP card or capacity thereof, depending on the nature of the conference (claims 9, 11-12).

Furthermore, the combination of Phaal and Roy does not render Applicants' invention obvious. Roy relates to providing conferencing services over a wide area network to individual workstations programmed with conferencing software in an ATM environment. Phaal relates to controlling incoming website user requests. The combination of these two features does not disclose, teach or suggest Applicants conferencing services, and thus the combination does not render Applicants' conferencing services obvious. Further, there is nothing in Roy to suggest the combination between it and the Phaal reference. It is thus respectfully submitted that Applicants' invention is not obvious in view of the combination of Phaal and Roy.

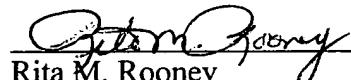
SUMMARY

All of the claims have been amended herein either directly or through dependency and it is respectfully submitted that the claims are now in condition for allowance.

Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned in order to advance the prosecution of this application in any respect.

Please charge any additional fee occasioned by this paper to our Deposit Account No. 03-1237.

Respectfully submitted,


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